



MID-COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

December 2, 2010

Ms. Françoise Carrier
Chair, Montgomery County
Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Ms. Carrier:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board to express the Board's opposition to the proposal to connect segments of Buehler Road near Spartan Road in Olney. There is strong opposition to connecting the segments by the three residential communities that would be directly affected by the resulting increase in traffic, and by the Greater Olney Civic Association ("GOCA"). While we understand that connection of the segments is contemplated in the Olney Master Plan, it is not critical that the connection be made at this time, as reflected in the County Planning Department's July 29 traffic study of the immediate area. Moreover, we note that Buehler Road was not designed to be a densely traveled road, and we are concerned that a connection of the segments of Buehler would create a "cut-through" road -- through the heart of currently quiet residential communities -- for traffic that should remain on heavily traveled nearby Old Baltimore Road and Route 108. Route 108, you may recall, in recent years was expanded to handle traffic flowing through Olney.

The area involved is immediately adjacent to the shopping destination points of the Olney Town Center, which the Olney Master Plan contemplates being "pedestrian oriented." Connecting segments of Buehler Road would not be pedestrian friendly. Rather than currently focus on road changes having no clearly demonstrated present need, we recommend that mitigation dollars received from the upgrade/replacement construction of the Town Center's Safeway store (on its existing site) be reserved for pedestrian improvements in Olney. For example, there is a need to extend the sidewalk north of Route 108 on the east side of Georgia Avenue so that it connects to Prince Philip. Also, south of Route 108 there is a need for the construction of a sidewalk on Old Baltimore Road, connecting Route 108 and Georgia Avenue. The construction of these sidewalks would, consistent with the Master Plan, facilitate pedestrian-oriented access to the Town Center and between residential communities in the immediate vicinity.

Please let us know if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

L. Blaine Charak
Chair